

Quarterly LGED Newsletter

A News Bulletin of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED)

Issue No. 92

January-March, 2009

Regd. No. 24/87



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is seen presiding over the ECNEC Meeting on 20 January 2009. Finance Minister Dr. Abul Maal Abdul Muhith and Planning Minister Air Vice Marshall (Retd.) A.K. Khandaker are also seen in the picture.

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Two LGED Projects approved by ECNEC

The Honourable Prime Minister of the Government of Bangladesh and the Chairperson of Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) Sheikh Hasina approved two development projects of LGED, during the first quarter of the current year, along with other development projects under different ministries.

At the meeting held on 17 February 2009, "Rural Infrastructure Development Project : Chittagong Hill Tracts" involving Tk.105.67 crore was approved by ECNEC to construct upazila and union roads including bridges/culverts and growth centres at 21 upazilas under Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari districts. The major components of the project are to develop 122.22 kms upazila roads, 26.60 kms union roads, to construct 950 meters of bridges/culverts on upazila roads, 315 meters of bridges/culverts on union roads, to develop 9 growth centres and to plant trees on 100 kms of roads. The project period is from January 2009 to December 2011.

Finance Minister Dr. Abul Maal Abdul Muhith, Planning Minister Air Vice Marshall (Retd.) A.K. Khandaker, Agriculture Minister Begum Motia Chowdhury, LGED & Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam, Water Resources Minister Mr. Ramesh Chandra Sen, Commerce Minister Lt.Col. (Retd.) Faruque Khan, Communication Minister Syed Abul Hossain, Minister for Shipping Dr. Afsarul Ameen

and Advisors to the Prime Minister Mr. H.T. Imam, Dr. Modasser Ali, Mr. Alauddin Ahmed and Dr. Toufiq Elahi Chowdhury attended the meeting.

Earlier, in another ECNEC meeting held on 20 January 2009, chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, LGED's 'Union Road & Infrastructure Development Project: Greater Jessore & Kushtia District' was approved along with other projects. This project involves a cost of Tk.159.45 crore to develop union roads including bridges/culverts and growth centres at 34 upazilas under 7 districts of Khulna division. The targets and major components of this project are to improve 450 kms of union roads, to construct 600 meters of bridges/culverts on union roads and 14 UP Complex Bhabans, to develop 15 growth centres / rural markets (with Women's Market Section) and tree plantation and care-taking on 150 kms of roads.

The objectives of both the projects are to improve overall rural accessibility, especially linkage with upazila headquarters and growth centres/rural markets to better the economic condition for the landless and marginal farmers by increasing agricultural, commercial and economic activities. Another significant objective of the projects is to create employment opportunities for the poor in the project areas and to improve the environment.



Editor's Note

Gender and Development in LGED

The phenomenal incidences of divorce, desertion and widowhood in rural Bangladesh obviously present a dismal picture of the socio-economic status of our rural women. It is an accepted fact that no sustainable development can ever be achieved without the economic emancipation of women. Prioritization of women's access to skill development programmes has therefore become a buzzword for generating vibrant economic activities to create employment opportunities among the rural women of Bangladesh. It might be encouraging to note that LGED has all along been trying its best to consider a priority for job creation and income generation among the rural women through a number of its development projects.

LGED's Rural Maintenance Programme proved to be the most successful venture towards maintenance of rural roads by a pool of 36,000 destitute women employed under the project. LGED had also undertaken a project in the CHT districts by employing 3685 tribal destitute women for 3 years for road maintenance activities in 111 unions under 25 upazilas.

Rural Employment and Road Maintenance Programme (RERMP) is yet another milestone of LGED's march towards ensuring gender equity on sustainable basis. The five-year project (2008-2013) would create an employment opportunity for about 52,000 distressed women for maintenance of roads at 4490 unions of the country. All the women workers in RERMP have been subjected to a mandatory daily saving of Taka 35/- from their daily wage of Taka 90/-, which would turn out to be a liquid asset of Taka 75,000/- including the interest after 5 years. On termination of the project, the women employees are expected to opt for some other income generating profession and become self-sufficient.

Gender and Development have been identified as priority issues by the Government of Bangladesh. LGED has also prepared and published the Gender Equity Strategy and Action Plan for the period 2008-2015. LGED's Headquarter, Rural Development Sector, Water Resources Sector and Urban Development Sector are following the Action Plan to realize the goals. Gender related data are also being entered in Gender Information Management System (GIMS) on regular basis.

It is hoped that the efforts made by LGED in contributing towards employment generation for women through their participation in rural infrastructure development would set a substantial benchmark in the spectrum of national development.



Shaikh Khurshid Alam, Secretary, Local Government Division, presided over the first Project Steering Committee Meeting of RIIP-2 of LGED on 24 February 2009. Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED and Syed Mahbubur Rahman, Project Director, RIIP-2 were also present in the meeting.

WMCS in Chuadanga district gets National Cooperative Award-2008

The Nabaganga Khal Water Management Cooperative Society (WMCS) Ltd., a body formed out of the beneficiaries and stakeholders of LGED's Second Small Scale Water Resources Development Sector Project (SSWRDSP-2), at the Sadar Upazila of Chuadanga district has been nationally awarded as the best agro-based cooperative society during the year 2008. The National Committee awarded 10 cooperative societies and 10 cooperative personalities, selected from the upazila, district and division levels, for their substantial contribution to build a self-dependent Bangladesh (Swanirbhar Bangladesh). Nabaganga Khal WMCS Ltd. has been chosen as the best Cooperative Society in Category-A (Agro-based Society).

After receiving the award, the leaders of the Nabaganga Khal WMCS paid a courtesy call to the Chief Engineer of LGED Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman at LGED Headquarters in Dhaka. The Chief Engineer congratulated them and requested them to work ahead with

more intensity and integrity to retain their goodwill.

Nabaganga Khal WMCS Ltd., registered on 16 April 2008, has at present a share deposit of Tk.21,02,960/- and a savings deposit of Tk.19,93,779/-. It has a Reserve Fund of Tk.2,58,691/-, a Maintenance Fund of Tk.1,25,832/- and a Miscellaneous Fund of Tk.46,38,452/-. The Society has been implementing training courses and a number of income-generating sub-projects for the general members on the basis of local need assessment. To meet such an end the Society has so far given a total amount of Tk.4,03,65,000/- as micro-credit to 2827 women and 1813 male members. A total amount of Tk.3,04,44,825/- has also been realized by now.

SCBRMP's Road Programme bringing the villages in mainstream economy

The infrastructure component of the Sunamganj Community-Based Resource Management Project (SCBRMP) of LGED has focused on building village roads to connect communities with the main road



LGED Chief Engineer Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman and SSWRDSP-2 Project Director Mr. Md. Mashur Rahman are seen with the members of award winning Nabaganga Khal WMCS, Chuadanga.

networks. Local community roads have often been overlooked, impacting tremendously on the livelihoods of village communities. In Sunamganj, roads are undeveloped partly because of the seasonal flooding in most of the district. Lack of roads prevents people from bringing their produce to markets, children from attending schools, people from getting to hospitals and often farmers from bringing harvested crops home.

Roads built by the project have solved all these problems in two unique ways. Firstly, as the roads built by the project are concrete rather than of bitumen, they can stand being flooded. The project is now supporting the construction of two types of reinforced concrete roads with different width. Moreover, by being submersible they do not require high embankments, reducing cost, removing the need to acquire more land, and not further disrupting the flow of flood waters. Secondly, the project supports the participation of the community people in selecting, planning, monitoring and maintaining the roads. Although the roads are built by local contractors, the community is involved in planning the programme of work, monitoring the construction and ensuring maintenance.

In recent years the project has made a further innovation. Instead of employing contractors to build roads using reinforced concrete, project community groups, known as Labour Contracting Societies (LCS), are undertaking construction of roads made from concrete blocks. Omitting reinforcing saves on the cost of expensive steel, but the design allows for later addition of lateral reinforcing bars in any place where there is an evidence of subsidence. Construction through LCS increases community involvement and generates opportunities for employment.



A CBRMP flood-proof concrete road built to provide sustained rural communication

Till December 2008, the project built 121 roads adding up to 127 kms and connecting more than 125 villages in 8 upazilas of which 16 kms are block roads. After having the technical evaluation of LGED experts and their recommendation this year, the project is going to replicate the design in more than 40 km roads.

A recent study revealed significant impact of the roads on livelihoods of the community in general and the poor in particular. It shows roads have generated new scopes of about 8 opportunities including rickshaws, rickshaw-vans, motorcycles, auto tempos, para-vets fertilizer store, call centre cum others and contractor services in the form of LCS and maximum of those have given significant benefits to the poor community, both directly and indirectly. It has been observed that agriculture labour wage has increased from Tk.70 to Tk.150; the income of a medical practitioner has increased from Tk 300 to Tk.500, more grocery shops have been established. The medium scale industries like brickfields, saw mills etc. have also been increasing in the area with improved road communication, and the poor are getting benefit out of those through employment opportunities.

The improved roads have enormous impacts on facilitating access to education, medical facilities, women mobility, and reducing social isolation. Roads are creating new livelihoods, bringing in new technologies, allowing people to have access in different public and private services, increasing mobility - particularly of the womenfolk. The improved roads are not only linking the villages with the mainstream road networks, rather these are bringing the villages in mainstream economy breaking the isolation and confinement. The road programme of CBRMP has given the people a new reality of progress and aspiration. To expand road network in villages the concrete block road would be a better option considering its manifold benefits.

LGED Project wins ADB Award

Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project (RIIP) of LGED had been awarded as one of the best performing projects by ADB. The Project Director of RIIP Mr. Md. Abdus Shaheed received a plaque and a certificate at a ceremony held at ADB Dhaka Office on 29 January 2009. Mr. Paul J. Heytens, Country Director, ADB's Bangladesh Resident Mission presented the award. The award was given recognizing the project team's excellence in efficiency, integrity, transparency in procurement, effective project implementation, achievement of targets, innovations, strong leadership, overcoming project's start-up delay, efforts in women's empowerment and other criteria.

It would be essential to mention here that RIIP is helping to reduce rural poverty through improving rural roads, ghats, markets and union council office complexes in 16 districts in Khulna and Barisal divisions. The project enables farmers to reach markets more easily to sell their produces



Mr. Md. Abdus Shaheed, Project Director, RIIP, LGED received a plaque and a certificate at a ceremony at ADB Dhaka Office on 29 January 2009 in recognition of RIIP as one of the best performing ADB projects.

and buy seeds and fertilizer, and provides easier access to schools for rural children. Hundreds of destitute women are being given jobs to plant and maintain road side trees.

It may also be mentioned that Mr. Md. Abdus Shaheed received three such awards from ADB in the past. One for the Southwest Flood Damage Rehabilitation Project in 2003, and two for the Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project (RDP-25) in 2005 and 2007.

Road Asset Management System in LGED

Managing the road networks in an effective and efficient manner to provide well maintained rural roads ensuring safety and comfort is one of the prime responsibilities of LGED. A well-planned maintenance programme of roads is essential to safeguard the investments made in road sectors. The major challenges encountered in maintenance management are : i) the deterioration in pavement surface is growing rapidly, ii) a major inconsistency between budget allocation for road maintenance and demand, and iii) a lack of efficient maintenance management of current massive and complex road network. The road maintenance programme therefore a continuous process in LGED.

Road asset management involves a large quantity of data. LGED field engineers rely heavily on computer system, such as database of road inventory, condition data, traffic, GIS database of road maps. Computer software is used to assess the road maintenance need of each district and the annual maintenance work program is then optimized as per budget provision. For road pavement, a number of condition parameters are in use.

LGED has created the road network database for proper management of its huge rural road network throughout the country. In general, the purpose of this database is to use it in planning and management of rural roads by



Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED is seen presiding over the 12th Working Group Meeting of RDEC Project-2 on 3 March 2009. Mr. Koji Yamada, Chief Project Adviser, JICA and Mr. Md. Abu Taher Khan, Superintending Engineer, LGED were also present on the occasion.

providing detailed information on roads and structures (bridges/ culverts). In particular, from maintenance point of view this helps to draw up comprehensive annual maintenance programmes including rational allocation of fund based on road category, surface type, traffic and physical condition of the road network. The said database was designed to accommodate all relevant information on the road network sequentially and the system is being improved from time to time to cater the growing needs.

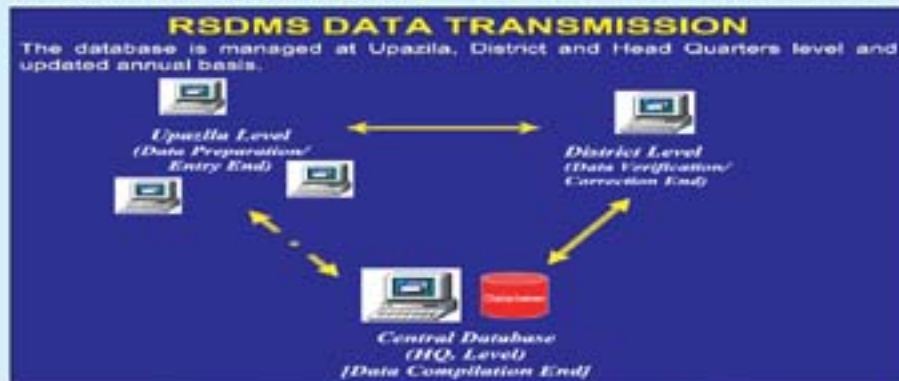
Data are stored in customized computer software called "Road and Structure Database Management System" (RSDMS), which is being widely used by Upazila and District offices. At the LGED HQ, the central database has been established to compile road network data throughout the country.

RSDMS provides information on road referencing, pavement condition, structure condition, traffic data, roughness & deflection of pavement, etc. to help in assessing annual maintenance need, fund allocation to districts, drawing up annual maintenance plan and also helps to attain transparency and accountability in planning and implementation of an effective and efficient road maintenance program. All the modules of the analytical model use

information from this database. Updating of this road database is a continuous process as the road condition, surface type etc. are changing with time. By linking the RSDMS through dynamic segmentation with the GIS database, it is now possible to prepare thematic maps showing pavement condition, traffic, current year maintenance programmes, etc. which is very useful in preparing/justifying annual maintenance programmes. The art of using attribute data and spatial data with the help of dynamic segmentation has been adopted in road asset management system. The software is still developing to cater needs and demands of the users at different level, so that, it can be applied as an effective tool in checking/ verifying the efficiency of annual road maintenance plan prepared by the districts. Continuous updating of the system is being done to use it as effective tools in road asset management.

Video Conferencing System in LGED introduced

The Chief Engineer of LGED Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman at a meeting with the LGED officials recently, inaugurated the Video Conferencing System in LGED facilitating direct conversation with the engineers at Comilla. This is yet another milestone in the divergent activities of LGED as a public sector organization in Information Technology with the assistance from World Bank under RTIP (RDP-26). The newly introduced Video Conferencing System would facilitate delivering lectures/speeches, monitoring and reviewing the progress through direct / face to face conversation from LGED Headquarters in Dhaka to the district offices afar. Initially, the System will be taken to online internet and VC connection in 10 regional offices of LGED.



The view of a diagram of RSDMS Data Transmission under LGED.



A view of Srikola Govt. Primary School constructed by LGED at Ullapara in Sirajganj district.

LGED making a steady progress under MOPME

Ever since 1990, LGED has been implementing 27 Primary School Development Projects under the Ministry of Primary & Mass Education (MOPME). Among those, 22 projects have been completed. The remaining 5 are in the process of implementation and expected to be completed by the year 2011. Under the completed projects 93,395 primary schools (govt./registered non-govt./and community schools) have so far been constructed/renovated/expanded and repaired. It is expected that a total number of 105,300 schools will be constructed/renovated/expanded and repaired within the year 2011. Those projects are being funded by World Bank, ADB, Islamic Development Bank (IDB), KfW, NORAD, EC, SIDA, USAID, DFID, CIDA, The Netherlands and the Govt. of Bangladesh.

The said projects under MOPME are being implemented by LGED's Upazila engineering set-up at the upazila levels. The different committees, named as "Upazila Education Committee" and "Upazila Tender Evaluation Committee" have been formed. The Upazila Nirbahi Officer is the President of the committees, while the Upazila Education Officer, the Upazila Engineer, the Upazila Agricultural Officer, the Chairman of Union Parishad and the Headmasters of the schools happen to be the Members and the Member-Secretary. The committees are functioning properly in respect of making an enlistment of primary schools for development, tender related decision making, supervision and maintaining of quality of works and reviewing the progress. Besides, the concerned School Managing Committees are directly engaged

in supervising the school development works. At every phase of works (lay-out, foundation, roof-casting, floor casting, etc.) the presence of the Headmaster of the schools and the Members of Managing Committees are ensured. To meet the expenses of civil engineering and supply of furnitures for the primary school at the upazila level, the fund is being operated by the joint signatures of UNO and the Upazila Engineer. LGED has recently prepared a Monitoring Guide for the construction of Primary Schools to facilitate the teachers and the Managing Committees to supervise and monitor the construction works.

It may be noted here that all works related to physical infrastructures at the upazila level including the construction and maintenance of primary schools are being implemented under the decentralization policy of the government's development programmes. The unique privilege of this system is that, apart from the government officials at the upazila level the elected representatives of the local government institutions are also involved in the implementation of the project and the accountability is ensured. The

Upazila Development Coordination Committee holds a monthly meeting to discuss and review the progress, impediments and the qualitative aspects of the works related to construction, reconstruction, extension, renovation of the primary schools and the supply of furnitures. Besides, 64 Executive Engineers posted at 64 districts and 10 Regional Superintending Engineers also supervise and monitor the development works of primary schools. Each Executive Engineer makes 25 checklists and each Superintending Engineers makes 20 checklists to supervise and monitor and send a report to LGED's Headquarters every month. The reports are examined to take necessary administrative measures.

UNDP awards Bangladesh Team led by LGED

The UNDP Millenium Project, led by UNDP Headquarters, had developed costing templates based on which an Energy Costing Tool was developed by UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok under its Regional Energy Programme for Poverty Reduction (REPPR) in Asia-Pacific. In this respect, a four-country Energy Costing Tool initiation exercise was held recently in Dhaka. The exercise led to the development of a modified tool in the country context through an interactive process by the Bangladesh Team, comprising representatives from MPEMR, PDB, REB, LGED and Planning Commission. The Bangladesh team led by Mir Tanweer Husain, Project Manager, Sustainable Rural Energy (SRE), LGED got the First Prize for the exercise in competition with Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

A follow-up event was later organized to present the Costing Tool to the planners and policy makers and handed over prizes to the Bangladesh team winning the award.



Mr. Mir Tanweer Husain, Project Manager, Sustainable Rural Energy, LGED is seen receiving the UNDP award recently at UNDP Office in Dhaka.



A 17-member JICA Partnership Seminar Mission led by Mr. Motoo Taki visited LGED Headquarters on 15 February 2009. Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED is seen briefing the visitors on the divergent development activities of LGED.

Foreign Mission

Japanese Mission visit LGED: A JICA Partnership Seminar Mission comprising of 17 Japanese citizens and led by Mr. Motoo Taki, Director, Partnership Co-ordination Division, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) visited LGED headquarters on 15 February 2009 to apprise themselves of the divergent development activities of LGED. Welcoming the guests at the Conference Room of LGED Bhaban, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED said, LGED is grateful to JICA for arranging the Mission to review JICA assistance to Bangladesh. He also said, Bangladesh expects that co-operation and friendship with Japan will continue to grow from strength to strength and the ties between the two countries will be cemented further.

The core objective of the visiting Japanese Mission was to see for themselves the implementation process of the Japanese aid activities in Bangladesh. The JICA Partnership Seminar, it is said, is conducted with a view to exploring better partnerships with Japanese civil society groups who have advanced know-how and experience including NGOs, local governments, private firms and universities, towards effective and efficient implementation of new JICA's co-operation programmes varying from ODA loan finance to technical assistance.

Later, two presentations were delivered to brief the visiting delegates. One was on Japanese Assistance to LGED and the other on Road Management.



A 5-member DANIDA Mission led by Mr. Jesper Ravn Hansen visited LGED on 12 March 2009 and participated in a discussion meeting presided over by Mr. Md. Anwarul Haque, Additional Chief Engineer, LGED.

It may be mentioned here that 12 projects have so far been completed by LGED under Japanese assistance of Taka 9450.21 million. Among the completed projects, 9 were Investment Projects and 3 were Technical Assistance projects. At present, there are 7 ongoing projects being implemented by LGED

with Japanese assistance, 6 of them are investment projects and 1 is Technical Assistance Project. The total cost involvement for the ongoing projects will be around Taka 12,826.41 million.

The members of the Japanese Mission visiting LGED were later taken round the GIS Unit of LGED. The Mission was accompanied by senior officials of JICA Bangladesh.

DANIDA Mission visit LGED: A five-member DANIDA Mission headed by Mr. Jesper Ravn Hansen, Senior Technical Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark, visited LGED on 12 March 2009. The key objective of the Mission was to identify the challenges and recommendations to GOB and Danida on sector and programme issues of LGED. The Mission met the Chief Engineer, LGED, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman and discussed matters relating to rural roads and Market Access Component Project of LGED. Later the Mission held detailed

discussion with the senior officials of LGED regarding the latest status of the project. Mr. Md. Anwarul Haque, Additional Chief Engineer, LGED presided over the meeting. The Mission was highly impressed to know the contribution of the LCS members in infrastructure development works.

The other members of Mission were Mr. Bjarne Larsen, Institutional Development Expert, Mr. A. Wahed Khan, local Expert and Mr. Mezbahul Quddus of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Md. Abu Taher Khan, Superintending Engineer, LGED, Mr. Md. Matiar Rahman, Project Director, RRMAIDP and Mr. John Van Rijn, Senior Adviser, RRMAIDP were present in the meeting, among others.

JICA Mission impressed to see progress of EBRIDP: A JICA Mission headed by Mr. Yasuo Fujita, Principal Senior Representative, JICA Bangladesh Office, visited LGED's Eastern Bangladesh Rural Infrastructure Development Project (EBRIDP) activities in Cox's Bazar and Chittagong districts on February 2 and 3, 2009 to see the progress of the works for effective



A JICA Mission headed by Mr. Yasuo Fujita, Principal Senior Representative, JICA Bangladesh, visited LGED's Eastern Bangladesh Rural Infrastructure Development Project (EBRIDP) in Cox's Bazar and Chittagong on 2-3 February 2009.

implementation of the project. In Cox's Bazar, the Mission inspected Coat Bazar-Shaplapur GC via Sonarpur-Monkhali road works, 100m bridge works on Cox's Bazar-Shaplapur GC road and Shaplapur Growth Center Market. During the visit, the members of the Mission exchanged views and opinions with the beneficiaries of the project. The beneficiaries expressed their gratefulness to the Mission and also to the Government of Japan for their support to the project. The Mission also attended a progress review meeting with the concerned LGED officials and consultants.

Mr. Chiba Itaru, Assistant Representative and Mr. Suman Das Gupta, Program Officer, JICA Bangladesh Office and Mr. Azizul Haque, Project Director, EBRIDP, LGED accompanied the Mission. The Mission expressed their satisfaction with the overall progress and quality of works achieved in the project.

Overseas visit/ Training

Mr. Md. Ansar Ali Khan, Deputy Secretary, Local Government Division, Mr. S.M. Abdul Jalil, Superintending Engineer, LGED, Messrs Kya Hla Khoi & Ali Hossain Chowdhury, Executive Engineers, LGED, Messrs Habibur Rahman Farazi & Proshanto Kumar Halder, Upazila Engineers, LGED and Messrs Md. Abdul Wahab & A.K. Fazlul Haque, Assistant Engineers, LGED attended a training programme on "Impact of Environment & Climate Change on Rural Infrastructures" in Vietnam from 23 March 2009 to 01 April 2009. The course was organized by RRMAIDP funded by DANIDA.

Mr. Kabir Ahamed, Senior Assistant Secretary, Local Government Division, Mr. Md. Zahidur Rahman Khan, Project Director, LGED, Mr. Md. Abul Bashar, Executive Engineer, LGED, Messrs Md. Anwarul Hoque, Md. Abdur Rob Khan and Md. Mostafa Kamal Uddin Bhuiyan, Upazila Engineers, LGED and Messrs Abu Saleh Md. Hanif and Mohammad Ruhul Amin Khan, Assistant Engineers, LGED attended a training on "Planning and Implementation of Community Markets and Market Access Roads" at Vietnam from 12 January to 21 January 2009. The course was organized by RRMAIDP funded by DANIDA.

Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain Howlader, Senior Assistant Secretary, Local Government Division, Messrs Abdur Rahim and Sushil Kumar Das, Executive Engineers, LGED, Messrs Muhammad Ibrahim Khalil, Md. Ehsanul Haque, G.M. Shahabuddin, Md. Mahtab Uddin and Md. Atiar Rahman, Upazila Engineers of LGED attended a training programme on "Monitoring and

Evaluation of Infrastructure Development Projects" held at Thailand from 22 December 2008 to 02 January 2009.

Mir Tanweer Husain, Project Manager, Sustainable Rural Energy Project, LGED attended a training course on "Renewable Energy / Bio-Energy on Rural Areas" in Bangkok, Thailand, from 8 March to 21 March 2009.

Hatirjheel-Begunbari Project to facelift Dhaka City

The government has taken up a project to enhance beautification of Dhaka city including the construction of an eye-soothing man-made lake and annihilation of water-logging at a total cost of Taka 1,480 crore. The project, named as Hatirjheel-Begunbari Integrated Development Project, was approved at the ECNEC meeting held on 28 December 2008 and will be jointly implemented by Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), RAJUK, Engineering Corps of Bangladesh Army and WASA. The project work is expected to be completed by the end of 2010. Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (BUET) has been given the overall responsibility of supervising the entire project works. The Government of Bangladesh will bear the major bulk of the project cost.

The Team Leader of the Project, Professor Dr. Mujibur Rahman of BUET, commenting on the project said, the Hatirjheel-Begunbari Integrated Development Project would dish-out multi-faceted benefits to the residents of Dhaka city. Once the project is implemented, he said, the city dwellers would get rid of human and industrial wastes

and an area of 30 square kilometers of the metropolitan city would be free from water-logging.

The major components of the environment friendly Project are - the construction of 11 kilometers of peripheral road, 12 kilometers of walkway, a 1150 m long aesthetically beautiful bridge, an overpass of 25 meters at Pantha Path Crossing and 6.8 kilometers of sewerage drains. Besides, the proposed lake would measure 5.2 kilometers in length. The lake will pass through Hotel Sonargaon, Madhubagh, Tejgaon upto Rampura Bridge. The lake might be an abode for fish cultivation and a source of recreation for the city dwellers. Moreover, the proposed road beside the lake will help the pedestrians, ease the traffic-jam and minimize worries of the people.

During the implementation period of the project, a large number of women would be engaged in earthworks resulting in creation of employment opportunities for them to improve their socio-economic condition.

Strengthening Local Governance under LGED Project

LGED is implementing the Second Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project (RIIP-2) in 23 districts in Comilla, Dhaka, Mymensingh and Rangpur regions, covering 183 Upazilas and 1,833 Union Parishads. Besides the physical infrastructure development in roads a particular focus is on ensuring sustainable management and maintenance of the improved infrastructure, improving access to services and markets, providing employment opportunities for the rural poor, especially women and integration of physically disabled persons through capacity development of LGED and strengthening of Local Self-Governance through formal training and coaching for the UP.



The chairman and male and female members of the Rajrajeshwar Union (char area) under Sadar Upazila in Chandpur district are attending a coaching session organized by RIIP-2. Project Director RIIP-2, Syed Mahbubur Rahman was present during the occasion.



JICA Vice President Mr. Izumi Arai while visiting LGED's Eastern Bangladesh Rural Infrastructure Development Project (EBRIDP) is seen making interaction with the beneficiaries of the project at Safar Ali Munshirhat Growth Centre in Chittagong.

RIIP-2 carried out a wide range of training (total of 54,960 trainee-days) for 1,833 UP chairmen, the same number of UP secretaries and almost 22,000 UP members. The formal training for UP secretaries is ongoing since November 2008, covering topics such as financial management, accounting, management skills, roles and responsibilities of local administration, community participation etc. The first formal courses for UP chairmen and members will be started soon.

In technical cooperation with GTZ, UP coaching and campaign activities are implemented in order to promote the principles of good governance and citizen participation, to improve UP capacities in office management, accounting and financial management, to strengthen the role of the female UP members, to enhance vertical and horizontal coordination and cooperation between LGIs, and to introduce regular maintenance of earthen village roads under UP responsibility. Initially 450 Sample UPs are covered in all 183 upazilas of RIIP-2 area.

International Women's Day observed in LGED Projects

In observance of International Women's Day on 8 March 2009, the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) organized a series of activities under Rural Roads and Markets Access Infrastructure Development Project (RRMAIDP) and Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project-2 (RIIP-2). The theme of the day this year was "Women and men united together to end violence against women and girls."

RRMAIDP of LGED, organized rallies and seminars to mark the International Women's Day in Patuakhali, Barguna and Lakshmipur districts. The women workers, numbering around 4 thousand, participated in the rallies and the seminars. The speakers at the seminars were vocal on the significance of the day and stressed on issues related to women's rights, gender equity and equal wages.

LGED also observed the International Women's Day at Subamachar upazila of Noakhali through its Rural Roads & Markets Access Infrastructure Development Project (RRMAIDP). On the occasion a colourful rally was organized and a seminar was held.

RIIP-2 of LGED also organized various programmes in observance of the International Women's Day including awareness raising speeches, rallies, puppet shows, folk songs, essay competitions and dramas at 14 unions of 11 districts. A large number of men and women including local UP dignitaries and government officials attended and enjoyed the programmes.



In observance of International Women's Day LGED organized a rally participated largely by women workers of RRMAIDP on 8 March 2009 at Barguna.

JICA Vice President visited EBRIDP works

The Vice President of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Mr. Izumi Arai, on his recent trip to Bangladesh, visited LGED's Eastern Bangladesh Rural Infrastructure Development Project (EBRIDP) activities on 2 March 2009 under Chittagong district. During his visit, he observed the benefits and achievements of different project activities funded by JICA in LGED. The JICA Vice President visited different road works, growth centres, primary school-cum-cyclone shelters and union parishad complexes. He visited Dewanhat-Baitoli-Dhamirhat Upazila road, Safar Ali Munshirhat growth centre, Ichanagar primary school-cum-cyclone shelter, Jangailkhan union parishad complex under Paliya, Chittagong. During his visit, he discussed with the union parishad Chairman & members of UP, Market Management Committee (MMC) in GCM and with other beneficiaries. At the same time he discussed with the teachers & students of primary school-cum-cyclone shelters and also with other beneficiaries and tried to know how the cyclone shelters provide benefits to the people. The UP Chairman & members and beneficiaries expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the JICA Vice President and also to the Government of Japan for their support which provides immense benefits to them.

The Vice President of JICA expressed his satisfaction with the overall progress and quality of works achieved under the project and appreciated the involvement of local people in the development works under LGED. Mr. Nasir Uddin Ahmed, Superintending Engineer, LGED, Chittagong Region, Mr. M. Azizul Haque, Project Director of EBRIDP and Mr. Yasuo Fujita, principal senior representative, JICA Bangladesh office accompanied the Vice President.

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